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ABSTRACT

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) is a nonprofit corporation that serves schools in 10 Pacific island political entities, whose affiliation with the United States ranges from statehood to free association. PREL's main office is in Honolulu, Hawaii, with service centers in American Samoa; the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap); Guam; the Republic of the Marshall Islands; and the Republic of Palau. These entities are spread across more than 4.9 million square miles of ocean and hundreds of islands and atolls. The schools are challenged by political, economic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. At least nine different Pacific cultures are prominent in the region. The main language of instruction, English, is not the home language for most students outside Hawaii. The 10 entities have about 285,100 students in 632 public schools. PREL seeks to bridge the gap between research, theory, and practice in education and works collaboratively with schools and school systems to provide services that range from curriculum development to assessment and evaluation. PREL offers a variety of professional development services for teachers, both in person and using advanced distance education technologies. PREL regularly partners with other organizations to provide coordinated educational services and cutting-edge research about effective approaches within multicultural and multilingual environments. These partners include schools, offices of education, institutions of higher education, community groups, and health organizations. (TD)

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Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL)

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Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation that serves schools across the U.S. and its affiliates from Rhode Island to Palau. PREL seeks to bridge the gap between research, theory, and practice in education and works collaboratively with schools and school systems to provide services that range from curriculum development to assessment and evaluation. PREL's main office is located in Honolulu, Hawai'i, with service centers in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap), Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

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Our Gulding Beliefs

PREL's mission is to strengthen culture, increase literacy, and improve quality of life locally, nationally, and globally.

These are our guiding beliefs:

- All children can learn.
- It is essential to educate the whole child.
- Pacific education is a dynamic partnership.
- Cultural diversity is to be honored and valued.
- Learning and sharing throughout the Pacific educational community are essential in achieving our vision for the Pacific child.

Our Vision for the Pacific Child

For the Pacific child, we envision a deep and abiding respect for self and others. High self-esteem and an unwavering belief in self are essential to a full and productive life. We wish for all our children to have the ability and commitment to maintain and sustain their culture(s) while valuing and being able to function in all other cultures of the Pacific and the world. To be able to thrive in any community of choice, the Pacific child will need to have well-developed basic skills – the tools with which to think critically and problem solve in a positive, dynamic way. We wish the Pacific child to have a deep sense of responsibility for the society in which he or she lives, to be aware of the environment, placing a priority on preserving and protecting it. The Pacific child should have a sense of commitment while seeking a world in which people are valued for their differences and their similarities. We wish this so our children and our children's children will have the capacity to cherish the past while being prepared for the future.

Pacific Region Served by PREL

PREL serves schools in 10 Pacific island political entities, whose affiliation with the U.S. ranges from statehood to free association. These entities are spread across more than 4.9 million square miles of ocean and hundreds of islands and atolls, many of which are uninhabited. The schools are challenged not only by political and economic diversity, but also by cultural and linguistic differences. At least nine different Pacific cultures are prominent in the region. The main language of instruction, English, is not the home language for most students outside Hawai'i. The 10 entities have about 285,100 students in 632 public schools. The nine entities beyond Hawai'i have about 101,470 students in 353 public schools. More information on the entities is at www.prel.org/pacserv/pacserv.asp.

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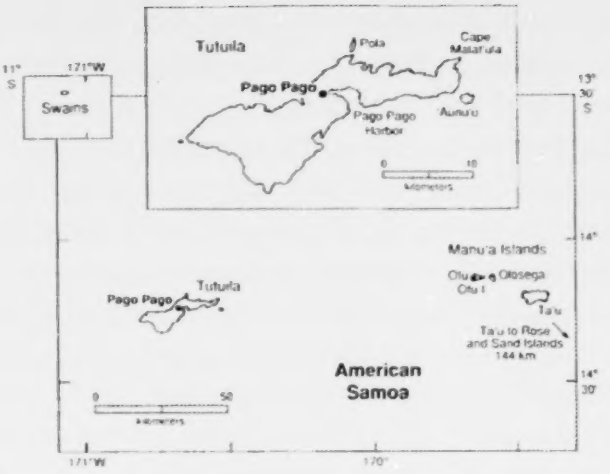
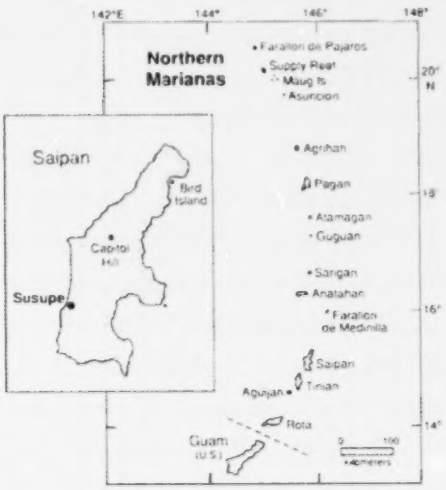
American Samoa, a group of islands in the mid-South Pacific, is located about 2,300 miles from Honolulu. American Samoa has a land area of 76 square miles and approximately 57,291 residents (est. 2000), most of whom live on Tutuila. Since American Samoa is an unincorporated territory of the U.S., its people are U.S. nationals who freely enter the U.S. The territory has an important tuna processing industry, and its capital, Pago Pago, has a great natural harbor with dry dock and port facilities. The government is the biggest employer. American Samoa has 29 public schools with an enrollment of over 19,000 students.



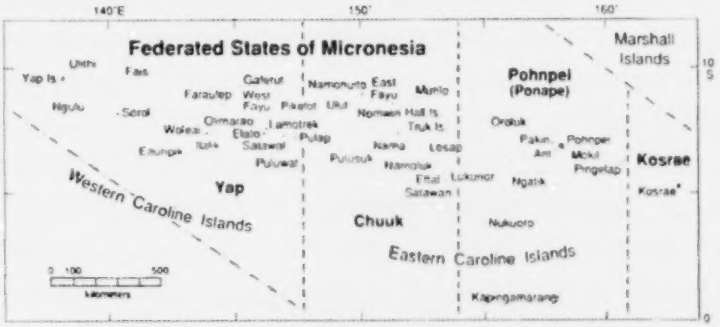
The **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)**, a chain of 17 volcanic islands, stretches 375 miles north to south and covers a land area of 181 square miles. Most of the 69,221 people (est. 2000) live on Saipan. Formerly a part of the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, CNMI opted in the 1970s to form closer ties with the U.S., becoming a commonwealth and a permanent part of the U.S. The people of CNMI are U.S. citizens. Tourism is a major industry; manufacturing is growing rapidly. CNMI has 18 public schools with an enrollment of 9,902 students.



The **Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)** consists of four states: Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap. These entities were formerly part of the United Nations Trust Territory, but FSM is now a semi-independent nation under a Compact of Free Association with the U.S. and receives financial benefits in return for providing exclusive free passage to U.S. military vessels through FSM waters.

Chuuk State comprises the volcanic islands in the Chuuk Lagoon and some 24 outer-island atolls – in all, close to 290 islands. The most populous of the FSM states, with 59,367 people (est. 1999) and a land area of 49 square miles, Chuuk is a world famous spot for divers, with a sunken WWII Japanese fleet to explore. Chuuk has 97 public schools with an enrollment of approximately 15,622 students.

Kosrae State, a volcanic island of 43 square miles with 7,833 people (est. 1999), has a wet tropical climate and many rivers and waterfalls. It is almost exclusively rural with a subsistence economy. Kosrae has 7 public schools with an enrollment of 2,461 students.



Pohnpei State consists of a large volcanic island, Pohnpei, and six inhabited atolls, with most of its 133 square miles on Pohnpei Island. With 37,013 people (est. 1999), Pohnpei State is the national capital of FSM and the site of the College of Micronesia. Agriculture is important to the economy of this beautiful and fertile island. Pohnpei has 31 public schools with an enrollment of 7,416 students.

Yap State consists of a group of four volcanic islands and 19 inhabited outer islands and atolls, with a total land area of 46 square miles. Two-thirds of its 12,055 people (est. 1999) live on Yap Island. One of the most traditional island groups of the Pacific, Yap has four languages: Yapese, Ulithian, Woleaian, and Satawalese. Yap has 34 public schools with an enrollment of about 2,500 students.

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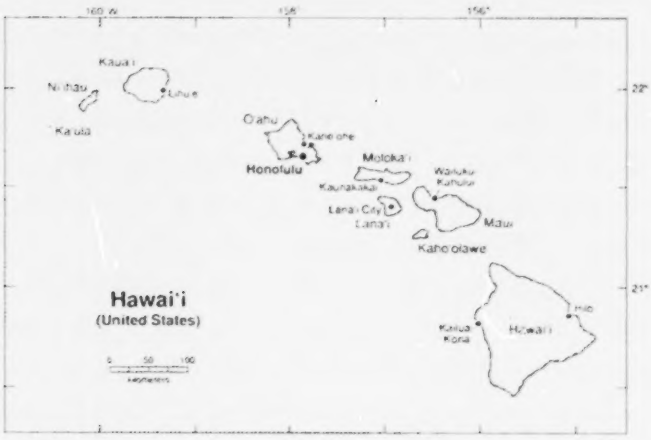
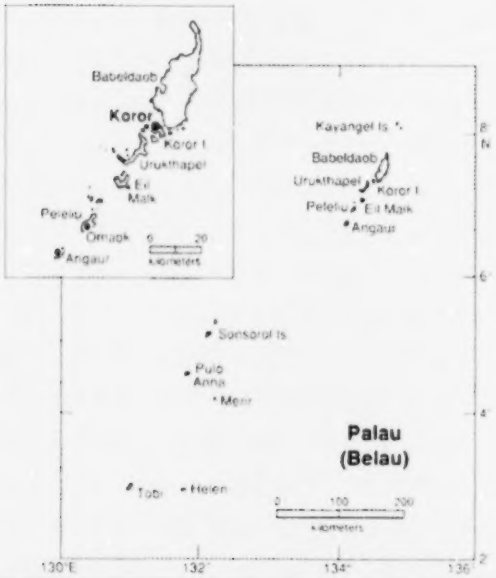
Guam, the largest Micronesian island, has a land area of 212 square miles and a population of 154,805 people (est. 2000). Formed by the union of two volcanoes, northern Guam is a flat limestone plateau, while the southern part is mountainous. Guam's population is highly diverse, including residents from locations throughout Asia and the Pacific as well as a large number of U.S. military personnel and their dependents. As residents of an unincorporated territory of the U.S., Guam's people hold U.S. citizenship and are free to live in the U.S. Tourism, especially from Japan, is the major private industry. Guam has 38 public schools with an enrollment of about 33,000 students.

Hawai'i, the U.S. Pacific island state, is the largest and most populous area in the region PREL serves, with 6,425 square miles and 1,211,537 people (est. 2000). The volcanic Hawaiian Islands, 2,400 miles from the U.S. West Coast, are the center of much trade, commerce, and industry for the whole Pacific. Indigenous Pacific Islanders constitute a minority within its diverse population, which includes Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and Caucasians. Its capital, Honolulu, is a major urban center, but many residents live in rural and remote areas. The economy of Hawai'i is based on tourism, the U.S. military, and agriculture. Hawai'i has 279 public schools with an enrollment of 183,629 students.



The **Republic of the Marshall Islands** consists of two chains of 29 coral atolls and five low islands stretching several hundred miles from north to south, with a total land area of 70 square miles and a population of 52,671 (est. 2000). The republic, formerly a United Nations Trust Territory, entered into a Compact of Free Association with the U.S. in October 1986. A mainstay of the economy is the U.S. space tracking station on Kwajalein. There are 80 public primary schools with an enrollment of 8,347 students.



The **Republic of Palau**, the westernmost jurisdiction in Micronesia less than 500 miles east of the Philippines, consists of a few coral atolls and several hundred volcanic islands, nine of which are inhabited. With a land area of 188 square miles, it has 19,100 people (est. 2000). A former United Nations Trust Territory, the Republic of Palau began a Compact of Free Association with the U.S. in October 1994. Its economy is based primarily on tourism. Palau has 19 public schools with an enrollment of 3,221 students.

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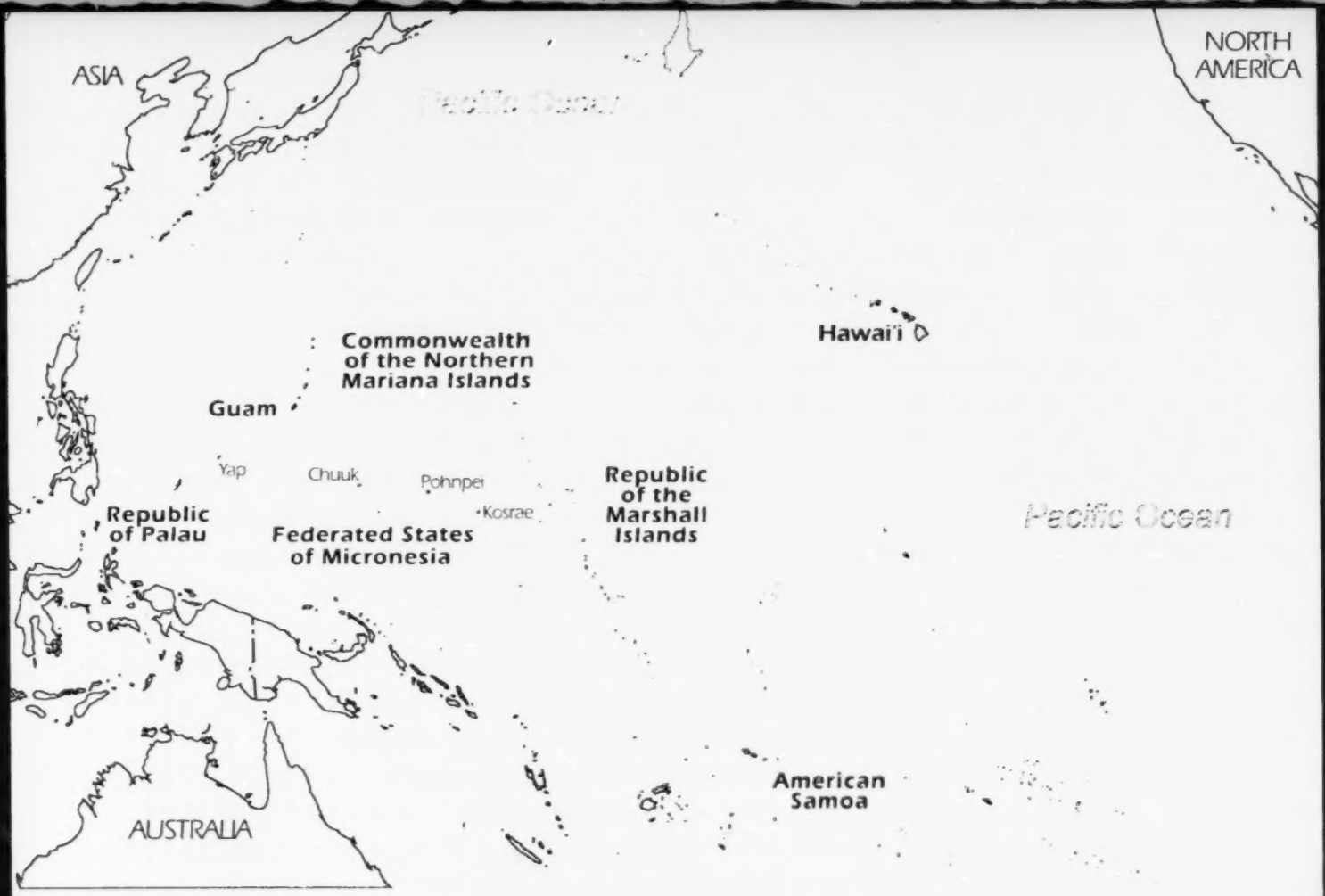

PREL's Work

PREL seeks to transform schools and other learning environments to help Pacific Islanders, English Language Learners, and other students reach their full potential. PREL provides expertise in all areas of education, as well as in project management, networking, and product development. We offer a variety of professional development services for teachers, both in person and using advanced distance education technologies.

Critical to this approach is a regionwide network of leadership teams and community-based service centers. PREL provides education resources, technical assistance, and training for and about the Pacific community and beyond.

PREL works collaboratively with Pacific communities to provide the best educational opportunities possible, often using the latest technological resources. PREL regularly partners with other organizations to provide coordinated educational services and cutting-edge research about effective approaches within multicultural and multilingual environments. These partners include schools, offices of education, institutions of higher education, community groups, and health organizations.

PREL's services and products are supported through contracts and grants from many departments of the U.S. government, the National Science Foundation, Centers for Disease Control, state education agencies, and others.

Contact Information

For additional information about PREL and its products, services, partners, and programs of work, contact PREL:

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